

**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**TWO ARRESTED ON CHARGES OF DEFRAUDING  
THE UNITED STATES**

Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Donald W. Thompson, Jr., Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Richmond Field Division; Andrea Whelan, Acting Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, Alexandria Field Office; and Joseph McMillan, Special Agent in Charge of the Mid Atlantic Field Office, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, announce the indictment and arrest of Joseph Ziadeh and Aida L. Ziadeh of Midlothian, Virginia.

The Ziadehs were indicted in August by a federal grand jury in Richmond on charges of mail fraud, major fraud against the United States, bank fraud, money laundering, and conspiracy to defraud the United States. In addition, Joseph Ziadeh was charged with bankruptcy fraud. Joseph Ziadeh faces a maximum penalty of 265 years imprisonment, a fine of \$12,750,000.00 and full restitution. Aida L. Ziadeh faces a maximum penalty of 250 years imprisonment, a fine of \$12,000,000.00 and full restitution.

The Ziadehs are charged with defrauding the United States between 1994 and 1998 in relation to multi-million dollar defense-related construction contracts which their company, Bell Construction Company, performed in Virginia and North Carolina. The indictment also alleges that the Ziadehs defrauded a bank by depositing a United States Treasury check in the amount of \$145,742.00, which did not belong to them, into a Bell Construction account and withdrawing the money from the account.

The case was investigated by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division and Defense Criminal Investigative Service. Assistant United States Attorneys Gregg R. Nivala and David T. Maguire are prosecuting the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.